(d) The steps taken to prevent crime against women include streamlining the functioning of Crime against Women Cell; introduction of gender sensitization course; deployment of police personnel at the Girls/Women institutions to instil a sense of security; and preventive action against the persons known or suspected to be indulging in crime against women.

Communication Network for Police

2788. SHRI LAJPAT RAI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that law and order is deteriorating and police forces are not able to show their performance due to poor communication network; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to improve communication network in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I. D. SWAMI) : (a) and (b) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Constitution of India and, as such, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to train, equip and modernise their police forces in order to keep pace with the changing security and law & order scenario. However, to supplement the efforts of the State Governments to improve their policing infrastructure, the Central Government has been implementing a scheme, viz., Scheme for Modernisation of State Police Forces, since 1969-70. Under this Scheme, financial assistance is provided to the State Governments for Communication also.

The Central Government is also implementing, with effect from the financial year 1997-98, a special scheme for Modernisation of State Police Forces in the North-East under which arms and ammunition, vehicles and communication and other equipment are provided in kind.

In addition to the above, the Central Government has undertaken a project, called POLNET, to improve police communication network. POLNET is a satellite-based project. It envisages installation of 833 Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSATs) and 11,502 Multi Access Radio Telephones (MARTs) in order to integrate police communication in the country. It will

link the National Capital with the State Capitals and will further extend the connectivity down to the District Headquarters/Police Stations level. With this, every Police Station in the country will be able to communicate with any other Police Station in the country as well as with the District Headquarters or State Capital.

Modernisation of State Police

2789. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of assistance rendered to States during the last two years for modernisation of their police force and details of achievements made; and

(b) what steps Government have been taken or propose to take to provide Forensic Laboratories with ultra modern scientific equipments for proper investigations and justice in Orissa and other States ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I. D. SWAMI) : (a) and (b) 'Police' is a State subject as per the Constitution of India. As such, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to modernise their police forces. However, to supplement the efforts of the State Governments in this regard, the Central Government has been implementing since 1969-70 a Non-Plan Scheme, namely, Scheme for Modernisation of State Police Forces. The financial assistance extended to the State Governments under this Scheme during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 was Rs. 50 crores and Rs. 72 crores respectively. Part of the financial assistance under this Scheme is for forensic science laboratories /finger print bureaux, etc.

The Central Government is also implementing, with effect from the financial year 1997-98, a special scheme for Modernisation of State Police Forces in the North-East under which arms and ammunition, vehicles and communication and other equipment are provided in kind. The expenditure incurred under this Scheme during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 was Rs. 12.48 crores and Rs. 50.87 crores respectively.

It may be pointed out that the Finance Commission has also been making allocations in favour of the State Governments for improving their policing infrastructure.